

IN THIS ISSUE

Looking Back, Looking Forward by Todd Post

Hard to believe we've done six issues already. Our charter was to come out bi-monthly, and only 9-11 slowed down our production schedule. You see there, not even a terrorist attack can stop ASK. Big kudos to our design team led by Joey and John only blocks away from the World Trade Center who quickly brought us back online.

It's been a great year for all of us on the ASK staff, but especially for me. I want to thank everyone who has contributed time and energy to the project, most of all to the storytellers in and out of NASA. You've been terrific, and so have our readers, every one of you.

At ASK our creed is 'For Practitioners by Practitioners,' and this issue, I believe, goes a long way towards reinforcing that. At ASK we respect practitioners in all fields and know in our hearts that the good ones share universal characteristics such as passion, curiosity, open mindedness, and a big heart to share what they know with those who don't. In this issue, we not only showcase stories by NASA project manager practitioners, we feature stories by practitioners from a variety of places we haven't visited before.

For instance, I hope you will look with special interest at Arnold Marder's story this issue about the world of metallurgy and materials science. Marder celebrates an exceptional practitioner in that field. While Marder's story is not about project management directly, we think you will recognize a number of similarities between the hero of the story and the best project managers.

Julie Pollitt in her story "Even Politics is Project Work" describes her recent transition from being a NASA project manager to serving on Capitol Hill as a Science and Technology Fellow for Congressman Tony Hall of Ohio. When Pollitt got to Congress she had no idea how useful her background as a project manager would be in writing legislation on military aerospace issues.

Since I've already reflected on where we've been this year, I might as well say a little something about where we're going. In upcoming issues we intend to present a great variety of perspectives for you. ASK agents are hot on the trail of some of the most intriguing and unique practitioners in their fields.

ASK 6 also includes two more stories on the Pathfinder solar-powered airplane project, precursor to the amazing Helios prototype that was so much in the news this summer when it flew to nearly 100,000 feet. Reading Ray Morgan's story



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Todd Post is the editor of ASK Magazine and works for EduTech Ltd. in Silver Spring, Maryland. He recently had an article published in *Knowledge Management* on ASK Magazine and the use of storytelling as part of the Knowledge Sharing initiative at NASA.

You can contact Todd at tpost@edutechltd.com and tell him what you think about this issue of ASK.

ASK Magazine

By practitioners for practitioners

Issue 6

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Looking Back, Looking Forward (cont'd)

"Hangar Bash" and Dougal MacLise's "The Only Thing You Need To Know" will give you a project manager's perspective both from industry and NASA. In the past three issues we've published other stories by members of the Pathfinder team. We've elected to do so because you voted for it. We heard from our readers that they were interested in learning more about a project from different perspectives. The Pathfinder case study is the start of our answer to that request. We also intend to present case studies of other projects over the next year.

I'm sure this next year at ASK is going to be as exciting as the one that just past. We've got plenty of stories lined up for you already. Keep telling us what interests you, and we'll make it happen. As Sherry Buschmann, the subject of our interview this issue, says, "Seriously, I believe communication counts for everything." Couldn't say it better myself. Don't be bashful. Tell us what you think.

Best wishes.

Todd Post